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# Killing of major was part of Soviet plot, says NSC

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A National Security Council staff analysis completed this week says the slaying of a U.S. officer in East Germany was part of a Soviet intelligence campaign of active measures against U.S. forces in West and East Germany.

According to NSC sources, the secret report concludes that the fatal shooting of Maj. Arthur D. Nicholson March 24 was the consequence of a deliberate Moscow policy and not the isolated act of a trigger-happy Soviet guard.

In an annex or summary obtained by The Washington Times, the NSC analysis lists 40 acts of terrorism committed against U.S. forces in West Germany and West Berlin or against West German connections with NATO between Nov. 4 and Feb. 28.

For example, one of these listings, marked confidential, refers to the assassination Feb. 1 of Manfred Zimmerman in Munich. Mr. Zimmerman was the chairman of a machine manufacturing firm doing business with the West German Ministry of Defense.

At the same time, State Department sources said Assistant Secretary of State Richard Burt advised a Soviet official on March 25 that Moscow should not publicly state its "tendentious" or biased version of the shooting of Maj. Nicholson.

These disclosures buttress criticism in conservative circles of the Reagan administration for not responding vigorously enough to the slaying of Maj. Nicholson because it is seeks improved relations with Moscow.

The information also fueled speculation that some elements of the Soviet ruling structure may be trying to limit improvement in relations between the United States and the new leadership in the Soviet Union.

The NSC analysis was created by its staff in response to a request

from Robert C. McFarlane, the president's national security adviser, a source said. It was unclear whether it had been passed on to President Reagan.

The four-page document says many — although not all — of the radical terrorist groups in West Germany and West Berlin are subject to direction and control by Soviet intelligence operations, sources said.

Nevertheless, the analysis reaffirms the widely held belief in the U.S. intelligence community that the Soviets are able to manipulate the terrorist radicals generally through resources and common ideology.

The analysis says Soviet intelligence is behind a concerted effort by these groups aimed at U.S. forces in West Germany and the Soviet sentry's action in East Germany was part of this activity, the source said.

Maj. Nicholson was shot to death by a Soviet sentry outside the East German town of Ludwigslust as he carried out surveillance that the United States contends was legal and proper under terms of a 1947 agreement.

The major had been one of 14 U.S. servicemen assigned to act as a liaison with Warsaw Pact troops in Potsdam, East Germany, the site of the final meeting of Allied leaders of World War II.

The arrangement gave the United States, France and Britain one mission each in the Soviet zone that is now East Germany and gave the

Soviets' a mission in each of the three western zones that are now part of West Germany.

The agreement provided each side with freedom of travel except to restricted military areas. Over the years, the missions have been used to collect military intelligence on each side's forward positions along the East-West border.

After the shooting, Assistant Secretary of State Burt, who later publicly called the killing of Maj. Nicholson "murder," met on March 25 with Oleg Sokolov, the second ranking diplomat in the Soviet Embassy in Washington.

According to a State Department source, Mr. Burt impressed upon Mr. Sokolov that the United States viewed the incident as a very serious matter and said there was no excuse for the killing of the major.

The administration was appalled that Soviet troops kept Sgt. Jessie Schatz, who had accompanied Maj. Nicholson to Ludwigslust, from giving medical attention to the dying man for an hour, Mr. Burt said.

He then told Mr. Sokolov that such episodes raise concerns in the U.S. government that Soviet lack of ability to control the use of military force would derail efforts to improve Soviet-American relations.

Mr. Burt then asked if the Soviets intended to make their regret over the incident known publicly, and Mr. Sokolov responded that they probably would at some point and had no objection to its being mentioned by the United States.

According to the State Department source, Mr. Burt warned the Soviet envoy against issuing a biased version of the incident and suggested it would be better to leave time for a thorough investigation.

When Mr. Burt heard that the Soviet Embassy spokesman had publicized the Soviet version of events without a statement of regret, the source said, the assistant secretary telephoned Mr. Sokolov to express strong criticism.

Mr. Burt said it was particularly distasteful that the Soviet spokesman failed to express Soviet regret over the incident.

Afterward, the Soviet Embassy did express regret when asked by newsmen.

The annex lists a chronology of terrorist incidents in West Germany ranging from the assassination of Mr. Zimmerman, which was attributed to the Red Army Faction, to a variety of bombings and harassment of U.S. military activity.